

REMARKS

The rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, are traversed by amendments above that do not narrow any of the claims so as to invoke any present Festo decision.

The rejections of claim 1 and, thus, the other claims under 35 USC 103 for obviousness from Rop, et al. and Borden, et al. patents are traversed because neither of these patents, alone or in combination, teach or suggest the whole matter of claim 1. The Rop patent neither discloses nor suggests cutting away corners of a flattened tube to form lips for separating, and neither patent discloses or suggests slipping the end of a second flattened tube between separated lips for fixing to at least one of the lips.

As recognized in the Action, the Rop, et al. only discloses telescoping one flattened tube into another. There is neither disclosure nor suggestion of cutting away corners for lips for separation, as claimed. And when the tube ends are telescoped according to the Rop, et al. patent, the (lip) end of one flattened tube is not fixed to the end of another flattened tube, as claimed. The tube ends in the Rop, et al. patent are only bridged by a bandage stuck onto each end, which is not the same thing as claimed at least because there are two fastenings to respective tube ends that may fail, instead of only one directly between tube ends, as claimed, the strength of which may be doubled, when on both lips, instead of halved, as in the patent.

The Borden, et al. patent teaches cutting corners from an end of a flattened tube (Fig. 1), but then re-rounding the tube for connection to another (Figs. 2, 3 and 4). The Borden, et al. patent does not teach a method for connecting ends of flattened tubes, as claimed.

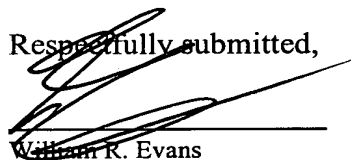
However, to the extent the left sides of Figs. 1 and 2 of the Borden, et al. patent may be considered as showing separated lips 11, it must be appreciated from Fig. 2 that the end 12 of another tube is NOT slipped between the lips and, because not between the lips, cannot be

fixed to either of them. As clearly shown in Fig. 3 of the Borden, et al. patent, there is always a longitudinal space between the ends of the tubes to be joined (see also Fig. 8) that has to be filled with a material 30.

Therefore, at the least, neither patent of the rejections discloses or suggests slipping and fixing, as claimed, and, therefore, the two patents together cannot make the claimed invention obvious.

Reconsideration and allowance are, therefore, requested.

Respectfully submitted,



William R. Evans
c/o Ladas & Parry
26 West 61st Street
New York, New York
Reg. No. 25858
Tel. No. (212) 708-1930

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1. (amended) [A] In a method for connecting [the] ends of [a] first and second flattened tubes [of plastic foil to the beginning of a subsequent tube, said tubes being used in particular for applying sleeves onto bottles or the like], the improvements comprising [the following steps]:

(a) [the leading edge of the beginning of the flattened tube is provided with an obliquely] cutting-away corners at [both] longitudinal edges of the end of the first flattened tube to form lips at the end of the first flattened tube;

(b) separating the [thus established two loose] lips [are separated] from each other;

(c) slipping the end of the [spent] second flattened tube [is slid] between the lips;

and

(d) [fixed in relation to said] fixing at least one of the lips to the end of the second flattened tube between the lips.

2. (presently amended) The m[M]ethod according to claim 1, wherein the end [edge] of the [spent] second flattened tube is at a distance from [those] locations of intersections of the cut-away corners and the longitudinal edges of the [subsequent] first flattened tube [where the obliquely cut-away corners of that tube end, thus] for leaving a space between the longitudinal edges of [both] the flattened tubes.

3. (presently amended) The m[M]ethod according to claim 1, [wherin] wherein the fixing is at least partly by adhesive tape [is used for fixing the ends of the tubes].

4. (presently amended) The m[M]ethod according to claim 1, wherein [for] the fixing [the ends of the tubes in relation to each other, the] melts materials of [said] the flattened tubes [are melted] together [by means of a short time, pressurized supply of heat].